Apprehension of irregular rains in 2010 due to El-Nino effect

†146. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the fact that due to El-Nino effect there is an apprehension of irregular rains and drought even in 2010;

(b) if so, the quantum of its effect on agricultural production;

(c) whether food security scheme can come under crises due to continuous decrease of agriculture production and whether Government is ready to tackle the situation in such a circumstance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Latest technology to farmers through NGOs

147. SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN:
SHRI N.K. SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology has decided to provide latest technologies to farmers through NGOs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the farmers in the country are unaware of latest technologies resulting in poor production of foodgrains, pulses, etc.; and

(d) if so, to what extent IARI's efforts are going to boost the production of foodgrains and pulses in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (PROF. K.V. THOMAS): (a) No, Sir. Indian Agricultural Research Institute has not entered into any collaboration with the Department of Science and Technology (DST) to provide latest technologies to farmers through NGOs.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has created a network of 569 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) in country aiming at assessment, refinement and demonstration of technologies/products developed under National Agricultural Research System. Efforts have also been made for transfer of technologies by the ICAR Institutees, Directorates through frontline demonstrations, organizing Kisan Melas, training of farmers/other extension officers etc.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

During the last one year, the activities of KVKs have benefited more than 93 lakh farmers through training and extension programmes on improved agricultural technology. The beneficiary farmers were also involved in 20,002 on farm trials and 74,732 frontline demonstrations, including hybrids of different crops, in order to establish the production potential of improved technology on the farmers' fields. Provision has been made for e-linkage of KVKs and for establishment of facilities like the mobile diagnostic-cum-exhibition units; soil-and water-testing labs; rain-water harvesting structures; basic plant health diagnostics; minimal processing; besides support to Directorate of Extension of SAUs for knowledge empowerment of KVKs. During the same period, 11.53 lakh farmers and 0.90 lakh extension personnel were trained to update their knowledge and skills on improved agricultural technologies.

As a result, the country has the record food production of 233.88 million tones during the year 2008-2009 (fourth advanced estimate). All time high record of wheat production of 80.58 million tones and of rice 99.15 million tones was achieved during 2008-09 (fourth advanced estimates).

Further, Government of India has launched a National Food Security Mission (NFSM) targeting three important foodgrain crops - rice, wheat and pulses. The total outlay of the Mission for the Eleventh Plan period is Rs.4882.48 crore. NFSM aims at achieving the additional production of 10 million tones of rice, 8 million tones of wheat and 2 million tones of pulses by 2011-12 through increased adoption of improved and proven crop production and protection technologies such as hybrids and high-yielding varieties; resource conservation technologies; integrated management of nutrients, pests and weeds; and improved tillage and other farm implements.

Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in addition, is also engaged in dissemination of its technologies through ICAR Institutes, State Agricultural Universities and Farmers Associations. Under this programme, IARI aims at developing village-based integrated models for higher farmer productivity and profitability. The high yielding varieties of crops, vegetables, flowers, fruits, etc. along with production technologies are ; being promoted by the IARI in identified village clusters across the country for farmer-to-farmer extension. About 14000 farmers/entrepreneurs, development departments officials, students, NGO representatives, etc., from almost all parts of the country visited the Agricultural Technology Information Centre, IARI during the year 2008-09 for farm advisory, diagnostic services, purchase of technological inputs/projects and training. About 2500 farmers/entrepreneurs from 17 states were able to get information on various aspects of agriculture through Pusa Help-line and Kisan Call Centre.

The participatory quality seed production programme has been instrumental in spreading the quality seeds of cereals, pulses and oilseeds in wider area, the efforts is continuing to empower the farming community for the adoption and diffusion of latest technologies in identified locations, and it is likely to boost further, the production of not only food grains and pulses but that of oilseeds, fruits and vegetables too.